

REMARKS

The remarks to follow are in response to the Office Action dated May 29, 2008. Claims 1-3 are currently pending in this application, of which claim 1 is an independent claim. It is respectfully submitted that the claim amendments, along with these remarks, bring the application in condition for allowance. Consideration and entry of the amendments is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4 were rejected by Examiner. Claim 4 has been cancelled. Claim 1 has been amended to include the additional element of a gas/liquid contacting step wherein a mist eliminator is utilized to bring a cleaning solution to which air or an oxidizing agent is added to contact the exhaust gas with the oxidation-reduction potential of the cleaning solution being controlled by blowing of air or the addition of the oxidizing agent so as to be at least 600 mV.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Patent No. 10230137 (Iida) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,009,871 (Higuchi).

Iida discloses a method for removing mercury from a combustion exhaust gas. The method includes injecting ammonia and HCl into an exhaust stream to oxidize metallic Hg to HgCl₂. The HgCl₂ is removed by wet desulfurization.

Higuchi discloses a method of removing mercury from an exhaust gas, including measurement of the oxidation-reduction potential of the washing liquid.

In view of the amendments made to claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that Iida and Higuchi, either alone or in combination, do not disclose the invention as claimed. Specifically, neither reference, nor the other references Kawakami and Honjo, discloses a mist eliminator in a contacting step to bring a cleaning solution to which either air or an

oxidizing agent is added to contact the exhaust gas with the oxidation-reduction potential of the cleaning solution being controlled by blowing of air or the addition of the oxidizing agent so as to be at least 600 mV.

None of the cited references disclose this additional element of claim 1, which is fully supported by the original specification of the application. As such, it is respectfully requested that Examiner withdraw this rejection.

Also, the Examiner rejected claims 2 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Iida in view of Higuchi in view of Japanese Patent No. 2191526 (Kawakami).

For the above reasons, independent claim 1 is not anticipated. Claims 2 and 3, depending from independent claim 1, is not anticipated, *inter alia*, by virtue of their dependence from claim 1.

Finally, Examiner rejected claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Iida in view of Higuchi in view of U.S. Published Application No. 2001/0007647 (Honjo) or the combination of Iida in view of Higuchi and Kawakami in further view of Honjo.

Since claim 4 has been cancelled, it is respectfully requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

As it is believed that all of the rejections set forth in the Official Action have been fully met, favorable reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited.

If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that she telephone Applicants' attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections which he might have.

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

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Respectfully submitted,

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